

# **State Court Administrative Office Child Welfare Services Division**



# Michigan Foster Care Review Board

# 2016 Annual Report



#### Mission Statement >>>

The mission of the Foster Care Review Board is to engage citizen volunteers to review and evaluate permanency planning processes and outcomes for children and families in the Michigan foster care system. Based on the data collected through case review, the Foster Care Review Board advocates for systemic improvements in areas of child safety, timely permanency, and family and child well-being.



## FCRB Program Highlights, Performance, and Data

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### **Vision Statement >>>**

The Foster Care Review Board will be viewed and valued by the courts, the Department of Health and Human Services, private child-placing agencies, the Legislature, and the citizens of Michigan as a major source of credible data on the performance of the child welfare system. Additionally, citizens of the state will use the data to shape public policy and promote awareness regarding the child foster care system.

## **Program Description >>>**

The Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) provides independent third-party review of cases in the state child foster care system. The FCRB also hears appeals by foster parents who believe that children are being unnecessarily removed from their care. Established in 1984, the Foster Care Review Boards Act, MCL 722.131-140, helps ensure that children are safe and well cared for while in the state foster care system, and that their cases are being moved toward permanency in a timely and efficient manner.

The FCRB provides this support by reviewing randomly-selected individual foster care cases from each county and providing case-specific recommendations to the family division of the local circuit court, to local offices of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and to contracted agencies. The review process also serves to identify systemic barriers to safety, timely permanency, and child well-being, and to monitor Michigan's compliance with important federal funding requirements.

The FCRB review boards are comprised of citizen volunteers from a variety of professions and backgrounds. FCRB program staff recruit, screen, and train the citizen volunteers on key aspects of the child welfare and foster care systems, including court policy and rules, federal funding requirements, DHHS policy, and state statutes regarding child protection.

Citizen review provides an objective perspective on the foster care case management process. Citizen volunteers donated over 15,000 hours of their time to case review this past year.

This annual report details the efforts of the FCRB during the past year and shares with Michigan's policymakers some of the systemic issues that citizen volunteers have identified while reviewing foster care cases throughout the state.



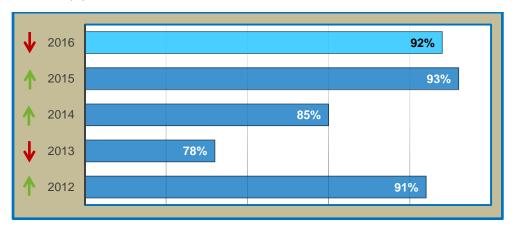
## **Annual Report Requirements >>>**

Michigan law, MCL 722.139, requires the State Court Administrative Office to publish an annual report of the FCRB program that includes all of the following information:

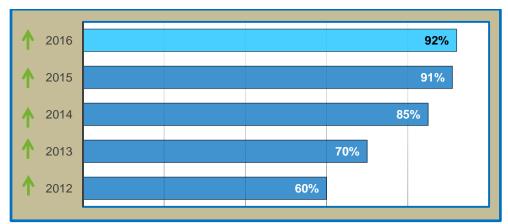
- A summary, with applicable quantitative data, of the activities and functioning of each local review board.
- A summary, with applicable quantitative data, of the activities and functioning of the aggregate of all local review boards.
- An identification of problems that impede the timely placement of children in permanent placements, and recommendations for improving the timely placement of children in permanent placements.
- The statistics and findings regarding its reviews of permanent wards, and identification of any barriers to permanency.

# **Program Performance >>>**

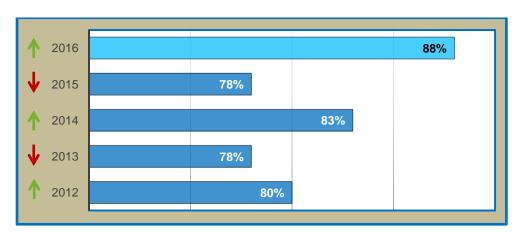
Percentage of foster parent appeals investigated within seven days, as required by MCL 712A.13b(3):



Percentage of cases reviewed by local boards consecutively every six months, as required by MCL 722.137(1)(b):



Percentage of reports distributed to interested parties within 30 days of the review, or prior to the next court hearing, as required by MCL 722.137(1)(b):



## 2016 Program Data >>>

Pursuant to our legislative mandate and mission statement, the Foster Care Review Board collects and evaluates data through case review and appeal hearings. This data is used to advocate for systemic improvements related to child safety, timely permanency, and family and child well-being.

Data collected is centered on these categories:

- → Barriers to permanency
- → Permanency outcomes
- → Appeal information
- County review data



### **Review Totals**

834 hearings held
involving
1013 individual children/
573 sibling groups
(each reviewed 1 or 2 times per year)

# **→**

### **Barriers to Permanency**

## **Top Statewide Barriers to Permanency**

Reunification: Parents unwilling to participate in or utilize services offered

**Adoption:** Youth behavior<sup>1</sup>

**Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA):** Child has unmet behavioral or mental health needs

General: LGAL not actively involved in representation of the children

Legal Guardianship: Youth behavior

Placement With Fit and Willing Relative: Relative's home physically unsuitable;

child has unmet behavioral or mental health needs

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For purposes of this report, the barrier of "youth behavior" includes children who are AWOLP (absent without legal permission), incarcerated, or in residential treatment at the time of the FCRB review.

# **→**

## **Permanency Outcomes - Closed Cases**

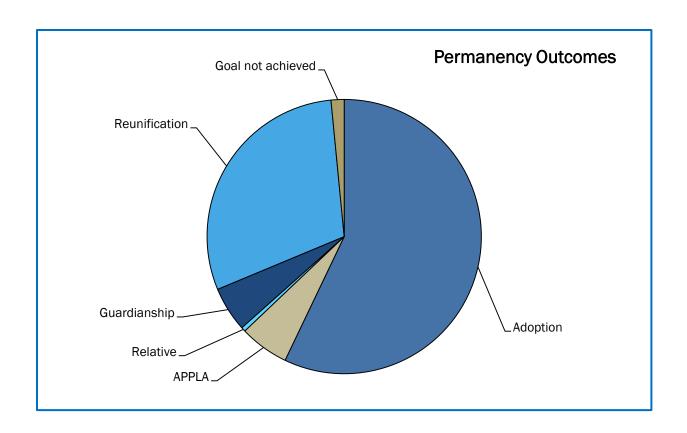
The chart below identifies the most common barriers to timely achievement of each permanency goal, grouped by category. Totals represent the number of times specific barriers related to each of the six categories that were identified during the course of FCRB case reviews.

Top Barriers to Permanency					
Category/Definition	Count	Counties Most Affected			
Reunification					
Parents unwilling to participate in or utilize services offered	298	Wayne, Saginaw, Cheboygan, Genesee, Muskegon, Bay			
Parents utilizing but not benefitting from services offered	255	Wayne, Muskegon, Saginaw, Cheboygan, Bay			
Affordable/suitable housing not available	144	Wayne, Genesee, St. Joseph, Emmet			
Parent lacks sufficient income to care for self and children	113	Wayne, Genesee, Jackson			
Parents are not participating in parenting time	106	Wayne, Kent			
Parenting time is not sufficient to support reunification	104	Wayne, Saginaw, Kent			
Adoption					
Child has unmet behavioral or mental health needs	140	Wayne, Lake, Ingham			
Lack of appropriate adoptive home	132	Wayne, Isabella, Jackson			
Competing parties	63	Wayne, Macomb			
Parental appeal of termination decision	42	Wayne, Ingham, St. Clair			
Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)					
Child has unmet behavioral or mental health needs	40	Wayne			
Youth does not have adequate independent living skills	34	Wayne, Muskegon			
Youth does not have identified connection to a supportive adult	20	Wayne, Muskegon			
Permanent living arrangement not identified	20	Muskegon			
General					
LGAL not actively involved in representation of the children	42	Otsego, Oceana, Ottawa			
Case not adjudicated in a timely manner	41	Wayne			
Frequent caseworker changes	23	Wayne			
Court and agency conflict regarding permanency	23	Wayne			
Legal Guardianship					
Child has unmet behavioral or mental health needs		Wayne			
Delay in licensing, home study, or background check on perspective guardian		Newaygo			
Placement with a Fit and Willing Relative					
Relative's home physically unsuitable	2	Genesee			
Child has unmet behavioral or mental health needs	2	Wayne			

The chart below presents the number of cases reviewed that closed to permanency this past year, along with the permanency outcome, the average days and months from the date the child entered care to permanency, and the average number of placements the child had prior to achievement of the permanency goal.

Permanency outcome	Total cases	Percent of total	Avg days to permanency	Avg months to permanency	Average number of placements
Reunification	174	30%	432	14	2.2
Adoption	334	57%	1010	33	3
Guardianship	31	5%	1399	45	4.2
Fit and willing relative	3	0.5%	4652	152	5.7
APPLA*	34	6%	2829	92	17.2
Case closed – goal not achieved	9	1.5%	2136	70	14.1
Totals	585	100 %	2,076	68	7.7

<sup>\*</sup> APPLA - Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement







### Recommendations

FCRB recommendations related to child safety, well-being, and timely permanence are drafted and included in each review report. Although they are not legally binding, the recommendations serve to advise the court and the Department of Health and DHHS, and its contracted agencies, about concerns noted in the three areas mentioned above, as well as provide timely feedback on the clarity and efficacy of the case service plan.

The nearly 2000 FCRB recommendations made last year not only highlight areas in need of improvement, but include commendations for excellence and success in the care of a child and in moving the case to timely permanence.

Review Board Recommendations				
Category	Count	Percentage		
Safety Recommendations made	510	26% of all recommendations made		
Well-being Recommendations made	764	40% of all recommendations made		
Permanency Recommendations made	664	34% of all recommendations made		
Total recommendations made	1,938	100%		



#### **Appeals**

Pursuant to 1997 PA 163, MCL 712A.13b, foster parents may appeal the removal of a child or children from their home. Eligible appeals are heard by local foster care review boards, which then either agree or disagree with the child's removal. If the review board **agrees** with the foster parents and determines that the removal was **not** in the child's best interests, the matter is then heard by the court or reviewed by the Michigan Children's Institute (MCI) superintendent if the child is an MCI ward.

## **Appeal Totals**

87 hearings held involving
126 children

APPEAL HEARING TOTALS					
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Appeals held: children	126	171	141	163	89
Appeals held: hearings	87	96	95	97	58
Hearings held timely	80	89	81	76	42
Percentage held timely	92%	93%	85%	78%	NA
Hearings held untimely	7	7	14	21	16
Percentage held untimely	8%	7%	15%	22%	
Appeal intakes	118	120	117	185	117
Ineligible for appeal	10	10	8	10	59
Hearings canceled	23	14	14	13	15

In 2016, the Foster Care Review Board Program received **118 intake calls** from foster parents who inquired about appealing a removal decision. Local review boards conducted **87 appeal hearings,** agreeing with the foster parents **45** times (51 percent) and with the agencies **44** times (49 percent).<sup>2</sup>

APPEAL HEARING OUTCOMES				
	Total	Percent		
Board does not support removal (agrees with foster parents)	45	51%		
MCI does not support removal	9			
MCI does support removal	10			
Court does not support removal	15			
Court does support removal	9			
Child status changed after appeal (no MCI/court decision)	2			
Board does support removal (agrees with agency)	44	49%		
Total outcomes	89 <sup>1</sup>	100%		

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Two appeal hearings resulted in two different decisions per cases involving siblings. I.e., the board disagreed with the removal for one child, but agreed with the removal for that child's sibling(s).

# **→**

# **County Data: Review Hearings**

County	Reviews: Total cases (children) reviewed	Reviews: Sibling groups involved	Appeals: Cases (children) appealed	Appeals: Sibling groups involved
Alcona	0	0		
Alger	3	2		
Allegan	11	5	2	2
Alpena	3	3	1	1
Antrim	2	2	1	1
Arenac	5	3		
Baraga	7	2		
Barry	10	6		
Bay	12	5	1	1
Benzie	2	2	1	1
Berrien	30	18	2	2
Branch	8	4	1	1
Calhoun	23	14	6	4
Cass	5	4	5	3
Charlevoix	2	2		
Cheboygan	8	2		
Chippewa	8	4		
Clare	4	3	1	1
Clinton	1	1	2	1
Crawford	2	2		
Delta	6	4		
Dickinson	7	4		
Eaton	7	4		
Emmet	6	2		
Genesee	34	12	6	4
Gladwin	3	2		
Gogebic	8	3	4	1
Grand Traverse	5	3	1	1
Gratiot	12	6		
Hillsdale	8	4	4	2
Houghton	4	1		
Huron	9	6		
Ingham	36	25	5	5
Ionia	1	1		
losco	7	3		
Iron	3	2		
Isabella	8	4	2	1
Jackson	23	12	4	1
Kalamazoo	47	26	4	2
Kalkaska	3	2	2	2
Kent	31	23	8	6
Keweenaw	0	0		

County	Reviews: Total cases (children) reviewed	Reviews: Sibling groups involved	Appeals: Cases (children) appealed	Appeals: Sibling groups involved
Lake	7	4		
Lapeer	7	4		
Leelanau	2	2		
Lenawee	5	5		
Livingston	4	4		
Luce	4	2		
Mackinac	5	2		
Macomb	26	17	4	3
Manistee	5	2	1	1
Marquette	4	3		
Mason	6	3		
Mecosta	5	4		
Menominee	6	3		
Midland	5	4		
Missaukee	3	3		
Monroe	6	4	4	2
Montcalm	3	2	2	2
Montmorency	1	1		
Muskegon	30	19	2	1
Newaygo	11	6		
Oakland	19	14	6	3
Oceana	9	3		
Ogemaw	3	3		
Ontonagon	3	2		
Osceola	3	2		
Oscoda	9	3		
Otsego	12	6	1	1
Ottawa	5	4		
Presque Isle	9	4		
Roscommon	2	2		
Saginaw	24	16	2	2
Sanilac	10	6		
Schoolcraft	5	2		
Shiawassee	5	4	1	1
St. Clair	12	9	7	3
St. Joseph	11	5	1	1
Tuscola	11	5		
Van Buren	4	3	1	1
Washtenaw	16	13	2	1
Wayne	275	137	29	21
Wexford	7	3		
	1013	573	132	87

## 2016 Program Highlights >>>



#### **Annual Child Welfare Awards**

These awards are presented at our annual conference every November to formally recognize outstanding work by child welfare professionals.



#### Congratulations again to the 2016 winners!



From left: Hon. Elizabeth L. Gleicher; James Novell; Glenn and Kim Wing; Hon. Robert S. Sykes, Jr.; Hon. Robert Butts; William Ladd; Troy Miller.

#### Foster Care Caseworker of the Year

**Troy Dandra Miller** 

MI Department of Health and Human Services, South Central – Wayne County

#### **Lawyer-Guardian ad Litem of the Year**

William Ladd

Michigan Children's Law Center, Detroit

#### **Parent Attorney of the Year**

Nancy Lucas-Dean

Attorney at Law, Mackinaw City

#### Jurist of the Year

Hon. Robert S. Sykes, Jr. Ionia County Probate Judge

#### **Foster Parents of the Year**

Glenn and Kim Wing Marquette County

#### 2016 Press Release:

http://courts.mi.gov/News-Events/press\_releases/2016.pdf



#### **Annual Training Conference**

The 2016 Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) Annual Training Conference was a two-day event held on November 4 and 5 in Detroit. Day one, which included child welfare professionals and advocates from throughout the foster care system, focused on the impact of early childhood trauma on children served by the foster care system.

Connie Black-Pond, MA, and Kristin Putney, MSW, from the Southwest Michigan Children's Trauma Assessment Center, provided an interesting and informative



presentation regarding indicators of childhood trauma and establishment of a related course of treatment. They educated participants about trauma informed treatment for children, in contrast to traditional mental health treatment, as well as trauma indicators to recognize in parents.

Day two of the training conference was for board and advisory committee members of the FCRB and focused on assessing whether a child's cultural, ethnic, and religious needs are being appropriately identified and addressed when the child is placed in a foster home that is not of the same culture, ethnicity, or religion.

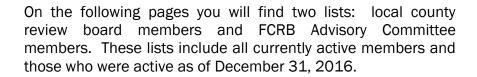
Brandy Harris-Woods, MA, from the Judson Center, is a former foster parent and did an excellent job of teaching the importance of attending to these needs due to the child's acute separation from family and culture. Although she focused primarily on the needs of children with an African American heritage, she was able to apply the related principles to caring for children of other ethnicities. A lively question and answer session assisted board members in understanding issues they have found challenging when making recommendations for children in culturally different foster homes.





#### **Volunteer Membership**

The Foster Care Review Board would like to express its appreciation and gratitude to our volunteer board members throughout the state for their time and dedication in helping to ensure that children are safe and well cared for while in the state foster care system and that their cases are being moved toward permanency in a timely and efficient manner.





	2016 F	CRB Volunt	teer Board Mem	bers	
County	Name	Joined	County	Name	Joined
Allegan	Jamie Walle	2015	Hillsdale	Linda Nelson	2016
Allegan	Michael Kiella	2015	Ingham	Cheryl Mask	2005
Antrim	Susan Manturuk-Gielda	2005	Ingham	Julie Loveless	2008
Barry	Ronald Heilman	2008	Ingham	Stephanie Williams	2007
Barry	Carol Stanton	2008	Ingham	Kristina Marshall	2005
Berrien	Joan Smith	2008	Ingham	David Shorter	2012
Berrien	Kathie Stancik	2016	losco	Vera Middleton	2012
Berrien	Lenore Becker	2012	losco	Alan Gould	2010
Branch	Lucinda Wakeman	2005	Iron	Sawyer Saint Andrews	2016
Branch	Michael Ronzone	2007	Isabella	Frederick Puffenberger	2005
Calhoun	Arlen Facey	2010	Isabella	Elizabeth Holtgreive	2017
Calhoun	Amy Wichterman	2015	Jackson	Harold White	2008
Calhoun	Marylou Bax	2014	Jackson	Diana Liechty	2008
Cass	Jill Ernest	2008	Jackson	Susan Richardson	2014
Cass	James Rutten	1999	Kalamazoo	Linda Dunn	2010
Charlevoix	Martha Thorp	2016	Kalamazoo	Brandon Youngblood	2015
Chippewa	Doris Posey	2012	Kalamazoo	Cheryl Nebedum	2012
Clare	Donald Murray	2008	Kalamazoo	Lisa Rodriguez	2012
Clinton	Michael Kessler	2007	Kalamazoo	Mary Roberts	2011
Clinton	Janet Olsen	2016	Kent	Jacqueline Rudolph	2007
Crawford	Laurie Jamison	2015	Kent	Vernon Laninga	2000
Eaton	Nancy Martin	2016	Kent	Merrill Graham-	2016
Emmet	Jean Frentz	2011	Kent	Daniel Groce	1995
Emmet	Kenda Deschermeier	2008	Kent	Jan Foxen	2004
Genesee	Quincy Dobbs	2011	Lapeer	Jerry Webb	2013
Genesee	Gordon Sherman	2009	Lenawee	Rebecca Cole	2016
Genesee	Neita Sudberry	2016	Lenawee	Jonathan Hale	2003
Genesee	Laura Shephard	2013	Livingston	Marcia Jablonski	2016
Genesee	Shawn Bryson	2012	Livingston	Lori Musson	2014
Genesee	Toyonna Robbins	2011	Macomb	Helen Springer	2011
Genesee	Lauretta Montini	2009	Macomb	Lynda Steele	2005
Hillsdale	Diane Langan	2011	Macomb	Edna Chang	2009
Hillsdale	Martha Crow	2001			

	2016 FCRB Volunteer Board Members (cont.)				
County	Name	Joined	County	Name	Joined
Macomb	Eugene Groesbeck	2000	Van Buren	Jan M. Jones	2011
Macomb	Angie Greenslade	1996	Van Buren	Meryl Greene	2008
Macomb	Elayne Gray	2006	Washtenaw	Marion Hoey	2003
Macomb	Rosemary Sear	2006	Washtenaw	Jessica Gilbert	2015
Manistee	Gary Madden	2006	Wayne	George Eason	2002
Marquette	Glenn Wing	2007	Wayne	Michael Eberth	2001
Marquette	Denise Gallippo-Sebaly	2016	Wayne	Katrina Dixon	2011
Mason	Susan Zahrobsky	2014	Wayne	Laura Fabbri-Tucker	2015
Mason	Alice Jones	2015	Wayne	Marilyn Remillard	2015
Mecosta	Brenda Hall	2015	Wayne	Mark Sweetman	2014
Midland	Colin Buell	2011	Wayne	Sondai Lester	2015
Midland	Stephen Ignatowski	2005	Wayne	Marvin Dick	2004
Monroe	Thomas Perry	2010	Wayne	Jennifer R. Smith	2014
Monroe	Frederick Corser, Jr.	2000	Wayne	Tonie Dance	1998
Montmorency	David Smith	2012	Wayne	Michelle Lenning	2015
Montmorency	Mary Jo Guest	2010	Wayne	Janice Cowan	2011
Muskegon	Patricia Roof	2011	Wayne	Michele Calloway	2016
Muskegon	Janice Hilleary	2012	Wayne	Johnette Connors	2011
Muskegon	Edward Holovka	2001	Wayne	Tanya Bankston	2016
Muskegon	Benedict Schramski	2014	Wayne	Lashawna Morman	2016
Muskegon	Todd Rake	2015	Wayne	Brenda Boyd	1990
Newaygo	Larry Feikema	2002	Wayne	Cleo F. Biles	2016
Oakland	William Liverman	2016	Wayne	Clara Dawkins	2010
Oakland	Gary Shripka	2011	Wayne	Darryl Lewis	2011
Oakland	Carol Borich	1996	Wayne	Rita Smythe	2009
Oakland	Cassandra Chandler	2006	Wayne	Jessica Strachan	2016
Oakland	Ayana Knox-Potts	2014	Wayne	Willie Stanley	1997
Oakland	Kay Norton	2011	Wayne	Ellen Stephens	1997
Oakland	Janet Evans-Covington	2011	Wayne	Anitta Orr	2009
Oakland	Darnita Stein	1997	Wayne	Elizabeth Oliver	1988
Osceola	Janice Booher	2009	Wayne	Don Novak	2008
Ottawa	Dennis Schaaf	2009	Wayne	Carol Terpak	2005
Ottawa	Susan Thorpe	2012	Wayne	Judy Mock	2009
Saginaw	Jerry Schlicker	2012	Wayne	Claudia Yates	2009
Saginaw	Ruth Averill	2014	Wayne	Jason Coplen	2017
Saginaw	Ann Densmore	2014	Wayne	Tina Gomez	2016
Saginaw	Anna Mayer	2014	Wayne	Dolores Harold	2014
Saginaw	Willie Owens	2007	Wayne	Michael Greene	2013
Saginaw	Shirley Norman	2005	Wayne	Edna Samuel	2013
Shiawassee	Jacob Drenovsky	2006	Wayne	Yvette Jenkins	2005
Shiawassee	Jorja Ackels	2000	Wayne	Darryl V. Hunter	2003
St. Clair	Robert Goldenbogen	2000	Wayne	David L. Hunt	2001
St. Clair	Kathryn Bruer	1991	Wayne	Jonas Hill, Sr.	2001
St. Clair	Brendan Aspenson	2010	Wayne	Nancy Silveri	2011
St. Joseph	Margaret Hale-Smith	2010	Wayne	Warren K. Harrison	2005
St. Joseph	Betty Taylor	2013	Wayne	Marguarita Ross Price	2000
Tuscola	Gary Holik	2006	Wayne	Tisha Estes	2000
Van Buren	Jennifer Carpio-Zeller	1999	Wexford	Barbara Russ	2014
van Buren	Jenniler Carpio-Zeller	тааа	wexiora	Darvara Kuss	2013

	2016 FCRB Advisory Committee Members				
Name	Title	Organization			
Hon. Karen Braxton	Circuit Court Judge	3rd Judicial Circuit Court, Family Division			
Jeanette Bridges	Program Representative	Foster Care Review Board			
Steve Currie		MI Assoc. of Counties			
Kenda Deschermeier	Board #28				
Marvin Dick	Board #1				
George Eason	Board # 5				
Michael Eberth	Board # 9				
Sarah Goad	Manager, Foster Care Program Office	Dept. of Health and Human Services			
Alan Gould	Board #29				
Elayne Gray	Board # 12				
Jonathan Hale	Board # 17				
Orlene Hawks	Director	Office of the Children's Ombudsman			
Ronald Heilman	Board #18				
Elizabeth Henderson	Management Analyst	SCAO-Child Welfare Services			
Terri Henrizi	Education Coordinator	Assoc. for Children's Mental Health			
Mary Johnson	Independent Consultant				
Ruth Kenaga	President	MAFAK			
Su Lantz	Executive Legal Assistant	Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians			
Kathy Lohr	Administrative Assistant	Foster Care Review Board			
Gary Madden	Board #27				
Hon. Karen McDonald	Circuit Court Judge	Oakland County Circuit Court			
Rubina Mustafa	Screening Specialist	Detroit Center for Family Advocacy			
Lynn Nee	MSU School of Soc. Work, Kinship Care				
Shirley Norman	Board #19				
James Novell	Program Manager	Foster Care Review Board			
Seth Persky	Director	DHS Office of the Family Advocate			
Kadi Prout	Director of Child Welfare Policy	MI Federation for Children & Families			
Joi Rencher	Independent Living Skills	MAGIC Program, EMU			
Janet Reynolds Snyder	Executive Director	MI Federation for Children & Families			
Kellie Robb	Program Representative	Foster Care Review Board			
Lisa Rodriguez	Board #22				
Patty Sabin	Executive Director	Michigan CASA			
Jennifer R. Smith	Board #7				
Hon. Robert Sykes	Probate Court Judge	Ionia County Probate Court			
Robert Thomas	President	Foster Care Alumni of America, MI Chapter			
Kristin Totten	Attorney at Law	The Law Office of Kristin Totten			
Lucinda Wakeman	Board # 20				
Jerry Webb	Board #14				
Addie Williams	Executive Director	Spaulding for Children			
Glenn Wing	Board #30				

# Michigan Supreme Court State Court Administrative Office Foster Care Review Board

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